

**ABERYSTWYTH**  
**RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

# **Annual Reports**

**of the**

**Medical Officers of Health**

**for the**

**Northern and Southern Divisions**

**of the Aberystwyth Rural District**

**for the Year**

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# Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the NORTHERN Division of the Aberystwyth Rural District for the Year 1949.

GENTLEMEN,

I herewith beg to present a report on the health and sanitary conditions of the Northern Division of the Rural District of Aberystwyth for the year 1949.

Area of the Division—79,151 acres.

Population—6,216 (estimated).

Rateable Value—£19,718.

Sum represented by a 1d. rate—£81 11s. 11d.

During the year no new industries were started in the division and the principal occupation remains agriculture.

A few farmers and farm owners have taken advantage of the Housing Act, 1949, and applied for grants to improve their dwelling houses. It is expected that many more will do so in the next couple of years.

The very fine weather attracted a record number of visitors to the seaside villages in the division, and a larger number of caravans than ever were brought in.

## Extracts from Vital Statistics for 1949

		Live Births		Still Births	
		Males	Females	Male	Female
Legitimate	..	31	42	—	1
Illegitimate	..	2	1	—	—
Total	..	33	43	—	1

## DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR OF AGE

					Male	Female
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	2	1
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	—	—
Total	..				2	1

The total live births for the division	..	..	86
„ „ still „ „ „ „	..	..	1
„ „ deaths of infants under 1 year of age	..		3

The Live Birth rate per 1000 estimated population is	15.8
The Still Birth rate per 1000 estimated population is ..	.62
The Death rate of infants under 1 year per 1000 population is .. .. .	34.8

#### CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATHS

	Male	Female	Total
Pulmonary Tuberculosis .. ..	3	0	3
Other forms of Tuberculosis ..	1	0	1
Influenza .. .. .	2	1	3
Cancer of breast .. .. .	0	3	3
Cancer of other sites .. ..	1	16	17
Intracranial haemorrhage .. ..	6	2	8
Heart Disease .. .. .	9	11	20
Other disease of circulation ..	1	2	3
Bronchitis .. .. .	5	1	6
Pneumonia .. .. .	1	4	5
Other pulmonary diseases ..	3	1	4
Nephritis .. .. .	0	1	1
Premature Birth and other Infant conditions .. .. .	2	1	3
Suicide .. .. .	1	0	1
Road Accidents .. .. .	1	0	1
Other Violent Causes .. ..	1	1	2
All other causes .. .. .	7	9	16
..	44	53	97

There were no deaths from any of the specific fevers—Typhoid, Scarlet, Diphtheria, Measles, etc.

There were no deaths from Diabetes, Appendicitis, diarrhoea in infants under two, nor from maternal causes nor puerperal sepsis.

#### General Provisions of Health Services

Medical Officer of Health (part-time): Dr. T. J. Jones, Borth.  
Sanitary and Meat Inspector (whole time): Mr. D. G. Bowen.

The changes resulting from the inauguration of the National Health Service Act, 1948, have gradually made themselves felt. There have been few abuses of the service in this division, although attendances at doctors' surgeries have increased very much.

#### Laboratory facilities

These remain unchanged and the laboratory of the Medical Research Council at the General Hospital, Aberystwyth, continues to give ready and highly efficient service at all times.

#### Hospitals

Most cases in the division needing hospital treatment are

admitted to the hospitals under the management of the Mid-Wales Hospital Board. These hospitals are the Aberystwyth General Hospital for surgical and medical cases; the County Maternity Home, Caradog Road, Aberystwyth, for midwifery cases; and Tanybwllch Hospital for infectious diseases. Tanybwllch Hospital also takes convalescent cases from the Aberystwyth General Hospital and in this way allows the General Hospital a greater turn over of cases. The Tuberculosis cases go to one of the many sanatoria in the country, but a large number from the division go to Tregaron or Llanybyther sanatoria for treatment. On the whole cases are admitted fairly quickly to these sanatoria. Bronglais Hospital receives most of the chronic and aged sick, but there is urgent need for further accommodation for this type of case.

#### *Clinics*

There is one child welfare and maternity clinic in the division. This is held fortnightly at the Old Schoolroom in Taliesin. In addition to the usual advice given at this clinic, vaccinations and anti-diphtheria inoculations are done.

There is a movement on foot to establish a similar clinic in Borth, and it is hoped to start it early in 1950.

Outpatient clinics are held daily for surgical, medical, and ophthalmic cases at the General Hospital, Aberystwyth, in charge of members of the staff.

The County Tuberculosis Specialist, Dr. J. Kenyon Davies, and his assistant, Dr. Walker, hold a weekly clinic at the General Hospital, Aberystwyth, for Tuberculous and suspected cases.

#### *Nursing*

The division is still served by four district nurses, who give efficient and loyal service in their various districts. In addition, during 1949, a Health Visitor has been appointed to serve this rural division, and she lives in Borth. She helps in the child welfare and maternity clinic and also visits the homes to give advice on the care and upbringing of the children.

#### *Ambulance*

The County Council of Cardiganshire is responsible for the ambulance arrangements, and the ambulances are manned by a full-time team of men.

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

### **Water Supplies**

The majority of the villages in the area are supplied with water by the water scheme of the Rural District Council. During the year this main water supply was extended to Capel Dewi, Tai-gwynion, Llandre, and Clarach Cross. The cost of these extensions was nearly £4,400. Further extensions to Taliesin and Tre'rddol, Furnace, Eglwysfach and Glandyfi are planned for 1950.

A local scheme was also put in to supply the hamlet of Llys-wernog, near Ponterwyd, with water during the year. This scheme cost £600.

Routine samples were taken weekly from the main scheme for bacteriological analysis, and the results were mostly highly satisfactory. Any unsatisfactory results were immediately investigated and promptly dealt with by the Council's engineer.

Every effort was made to maintain the various small village supplies in a satisfactory condition. No foci of really dangerous pollution of any water supply was even revealed during the year by bacteriological or chemical analyses.

Because all the water supplies in the area are acid in reaction, and therefore plumbo solvent, no lead service pipes are allowed.

During the year considerable work was done in sampling water sources and supplies on farms, followed by advisory work to enable farmers to qualify for the Ministry of Agriculture grant towards the cost of piping these supplies to the farm houses and buildings. Seventeen cases were investigated, and certificates were issued to those that were satisfactory.

### **Sewerage**

This remains the most urgent problem in the division—of all the villages and hamlets in the division, one only is completely sewered, viz., Clarach. Schemes are in preparation for sewerage Borth, Talybont, Llanbadarn, Bow Street and Llandre, but during the year little progress was done.

Sewerage is disposed of in the majority of cases by cesspools or the conservancy system, both of which are highly unsatisfactory, particularly the dry conservancy systems as the contents of pail closets are often emptied into streams, or dumped on refuse tips and on beaches. The risk to health is obvious and it is strongly urged that the proposed sewerage schemes be pressed on with all possible effort and urgency.

Samples of sewerage effluent were taken from the disposal works at Penrhyncoch and Clarach serving the Council's housing estates. When these samples were analysed the results were not always satisfactory—due mainly to the difficulty of maintaining the plants through the lack of labour and to the distance apart of the works.

Little use is made of the Council's cart for emptying cesspools. During the year only nineteen cesspools were again cleared by this means.

There is no nightsoil cart in operation in the division.

### **Housing**

There has been but slight improvement in the housing position in the division during the year. Only very slow progress was made



in the Council's building programme at Talybont and Clarach.

A large number of cottages, long since condemned as unfit for human habitation, are still the only homes available for scores of families. There are many instances of serious overcrowding in such cottages and in one village 14 or 15 adults and children crowd into three bedrooms. Many of these dilapidated cottages could be improved were the owners given a little grant of money to help re-condition them.

The Council decided to give grants up to half the amount of the cost of improvement to owners of farm houses under the Housing Act, 1949. Many such applications have been favourably considered.

Owners of some houses have been asked to carry out urgently necessary repairs to their houses, and notices were served on them to this effect on receiving complaints from tenants.

### **Civil Building Control**

The Sanitary Inspector acts as local licensing officer on behalf of the Ministry of Works in this matter. During the year licences to the value of £9,822 were issued for the repair and improvement of houses. Licences to erect nine new houses were also granted to private individuals during the twelve months.

### **Ditches and Watercourses**

The following ditches and watercourses received attention during the year :—

Llanbadarn Fullbrook.

Dolhalog Leet.

Borth Leet.

Brynrobyn and Penygraig, Borth.

Llangawsai ditch.

Quebec ditch, Llanbadarn.

Goginan sewer outfall ditch.

The drainage systems at Llangawsai, Llanbadarn, Borth and Pwllhobi were also attended to, when required.

### **Nuisances**

Eighty-four complaints were investigated during the year, and where necessary preliminary or statutory notices were served in an endeavour to abate them.

### **Refuse Collection**

Refuse is collected regularly from 23 villages in the division, and is disposed of by controlled tipping at Borth and Llanbadarn. The method of collection and disposal is highly satisfactory and few complaints were received about the service. Rodent control measures were carried out on both tips periodically, and each time a large number of rats were destroyed.

## **Disinfestation**

Disinfestation of dwellings infested with fleas was carried out by means of D.D.T. spray, which proved most effective.

## **Camping Sites**

No new licences were granted during the year for camping sites. All the existing camps were regularly inspected during the summer season.

## **Foods, etc.**

### *Meat Inspection*

No slaughtering is carried out in the division, but at the Ministry of Food Central Slaughter House in Aberystwyth. Meat is thence distributed by lorry to the butchers in the division. Pending the appointment of a meat inspector by the Aberystwyth Town Council, the duties have been carried out by the Rural District Sanitary Inspector.

Butchers' shops and delivery vans in the division found to be quite satisfactory on inspection.

## **Ice Cream**

There are 18 premises in the division where ice cream is sold. All these are registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. These premises are periodically inspected, and samples of ice cream tested by Methylene Blue Test. The quality of the product was satisfactory by this test.

Various tinned foods were voluntarily surrendered by traders and condemned as unfit for human consumption—among these were tinned milk, fruit, meat, and vegetables. A quantity of bacon was also seized and destroyed on account of decomposition.

## **Milk and Dairies**

The control of milk production passed to the Ministry of Agriculture on October 1st, 1949, when the Council's Registers of wholesale trades and retail purveyors of milk were surrendered to the Ministry.

The control of milk distributors is still retained by the Council, as also is the issuing of licences to dealers for the sale of specially designated milks and pasteurised milk.

One new distributor was registered and three new dealers' licences were issued, after inspection, during the year.

## **Bakehouses**

There are four bakehouses in the division. These were regularly inspected and some of them are in a bad state of repair. In particular urgent improvements were called for in the drainage system of one of these premises. This work was carried out by the Council, and the cost charged to the owner.

## **Factories**

There has been no change in the number of factories on the



Council's register. Of the 27 factories, 17 are supplied with power, and 10 without.

Periodic visits were paid to all these premises, and an endeavour made to improve the sanitary accommodation in them. Little progress can be reported, but efforts are being continued to get the improvements made.

### **PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

Twenty-six cases of notifiable infectious diseases were reported during 1949. These were :—

- 13 cases of measles.
- 7 cases of chickenpox.
- 2 cases of scarlet fever.
- 2 cases of whooping cough.
- 1 case of pneumonia.
- 1 case of dysentery.

One case of scarlet fever was admitted to hospital for treatment, the other was isolated and treated at home.

There were no cases of diphtheria, small pox, enteric fever nor puerperal fever reported in the division.

Disinfection of infected clothing, rooms and fomites was carried out.

#### **Tuberculosis**

There was a marked drop in the number of new cases of tuberculosis—one only of pulmonary tuberculosis was notified in the division, as opposed to a total of nine cases for 1948.

There were four deaths from tuberculosis during the year, as against five for 1948.

I remain, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

THOS. J. JONES.

# Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the SOUTHERN Division of the Aberystwyth Rural District for the Year 1949.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my report on the vital statistics and sanitary condition of the district for the year 1949.

AREA OF DIVISION.—61,577 acres.

POPULATION.—Estimated 3,994.

INDUSTRY.—Practically the only industry is agriculture and chiefly, at the present time, milk production.

## Extracts from Vital Statistics

### LIVE BIRTHS :

*Legitimate*—Male 21, Female 25.

*Illegitimate*—Male 1, Female 5.

Total legitimate and illegitimate births, 52.

Giving a birth rate (live) of 13.5 per 1,000 of population.

### STILL BIRTHS :

*Legitimate*—Male 1, Female 0.

*Illegitimate*—Male 0, Female 0.

Giving the rate of .28 per 1,000.

Death rate of infants under 1 year of age : 1.

Giving the rate of 19.2 per 1,000 of live births.

## Chief Causes of Death

	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis (non-pulmonary) ..	2	0	2
Influenza .. ..	1	0	1
Polionyelitis .. ..	0	1	1
Cancer of buceal cavity .. ..	1	0	1
Cancer of breast .. ..	0	2	2
Cancer of all other sites .. ..	3	3	6
Intracranial vascular lesions ..	4	11	15
Other diseases of circ. system ..	1	3	4
Bronchitis .. ..	0	1	1
Pneumonia .. ..	4	1	5
Other respiratory diseases ..	3	0	3
Ulcer of stomach or duadenum ..	1	0	1
Other digestive diseases .. ..	2	0	2
Heart diseases .. ..	9	14	23
Birth injuries .. ..	1	0	1
Nephritis .. ..	0	1	1
Violent Causes .. ..	0	2	2
All other causes .. ..	2	2	4
	34	41	75

There were no deaths from Measles, Whooping Cough or Diarrhoea. From the above table it will be seen that Heart Disease accounted for 23 deaths or nearly one-third of the total number, followed by 15 deaths from intracranial visceral lesions, and 9 deaths from cancer. There were 8 deaths from respiratory diseases and only 2 deaths from Tuberculosis, both of which were non-pulmonary.

The birth rate was 13.5 per 1,000 and the death rate 19 per 1,000 of the population. The high death rate is attributable to the advanced years of the bulk of the population. The death rate for England and Wales for the year was 11.7 per 1,000 and birth rate 16.7 per 1,000.

### **General Provision of Health Services**

Medical Officer of Health : J. A. REES.

Sanitary and Meat Inspector : Mr. D. G. BOWEN.

The British National Health Service has been functioning for over two years and satisfactorily on the whole. Still certain defects exist which probably will be put right in time. As stated in last year's report, all the voluntary and municipal hospitals have passed under the control of Regional Hospital Boards. The Mid-Wales Board under the able Chairmanship of Sir George Fossett Roberts controls the Aberystwyth Hospital, which is well equipped and efficiently staffed and admits all very acute cases without delay, but less severe or chronic cases have to await admission for some time owing to lack of beds. Conditions have been somewhat eased lately by making use of Tanybwllch and Bronglais for the accommodation of convalescent patients.

The County Maternity Hospital in Caradog Road is a boon to the town and county, but the accommodation is often insufficient to meet the demand.

### **LABORATORY SERVICES**

The Medical Research Laboratory at the Hospital, under the able supervision of Dr. Sudds, is convenient and rendering invaluable service in examining blood, milk, water and foodstuffs, as well as swabs and sputum.

Wassermann's tests are carried out at the Beck Laboratory, Swansea.

### **CLINICS**

Tuberculosis clinics are held every Monday at the Hospital by Dr. Kenyon Davies and his assistant. Suspected T.B. patients are referred to them by practitioners throughout the area for further guidance and treatment. There are also clinics for surgical and medical cases conducted by members of the Hospital staff two or three times a week. Specialists in various fields also visit the Hospital at frequent intervals.

## NURSING

There are five Nursing Associations in the area, controlled by the County M.O. Health. The nurses attend all medical and surgical cases in their districts as well as confinements at the patients' homes.

## AMBULANCE SERVICE

Ambulance service is under the control of the County M.O.H. and the Public Health Committee. There is a station at Aberystwyth with full-time staff. The service is provided free of charge to the patient if ordered by a doctor, nurse or policeman. I am afraid many cases that could be otherwise transported unnecessarily use the ambulance.

## Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

All villages in the division are served by small water-supply schemes which are maintained by the Surveyor's department and the water submitted from time to time to bacteriological analyses at the Public Health Laboratory of the Aberystwyth Hospital. Samples of water supplying farms were also taken and, if found satisfactory, certificates were issued enabling the farmers concerned to obtain the Government grant given towards the cost of bringing the water in pipes to the farm premises. Forty-five samples were taken for bacteriological analyses, and three for chemical analysis by Mr. H. J. Evans, Public Analyst, Carmarthen. Occasionally complaints were received regarding the purity of the supplies, which, on investigation, were found to be of a trivial nature and usually due to surface water. These defects were remedied by protecting the sources and the mains. The Council is considering a comprehensive scheme for supplying the whole of this division from Glandwgan, near Trisant. If this scheme be adopted all the villages will be supplied with piped water, which will have been filtered and chlorinated at the source. The County Council are advocating a scheme to embrace the whole County, but this District Council wishes to keep control of their water undertakings and proceed with the Glandwgan scheme.

## SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Samples of sewage effluent from the Council's sewage disposal works at Llanilar were taken and sent for analysis. They were found not to be quite up to the standard recommended by the Royal Commission in its report on sewage disposal. This defect is due to the difficulty of maintaining the plant in a satisfactory condition.

Schemes for the sewerage of Llanilar, Llanrhystyd and Llanfarian have been prepared and submitted to the Welsh Board of Health for approval.

Sewage disposal generally in the district is by means of cesspool and pail closets, the latter unfortunately are in many cases emptied into nearby streams, polluting them and often become a nuisance.

## HOUSING

The Council is fully alive to the need of additional houses to meet the growing demand and the 24 houses at Llanfarian were completed. Eighteen traditional houses at Abermagwr and eight at Llanrhystyd are in course of erection and others in different localities proceeded with in the near future.

Facilities to owners to obtain grants for repairing their houses are now available under the Housing Act, 1949. The Council decided to give grants up to 50% of the cost of the improvement work.

Many housing repairs were carried out by landlords on service of notices resulting from complaints by tenants. Two houses were requisitioned and repaired by the Council—one at Trisant and the other at Llanafan, and let to persons desperately in need of houses.

## MEAT INSPECTION

No slaughtering of animals takes place in the division for the general supply of meat to the public with the exception of pigs killed by farmers and cottagers for their own use. Slaughtering is carried out in the Aberystwyth abattoir and the meat inspected before being distributed to the retail butchers in the area. Distribution is effected by means of an ordinary lorry without any protection from contamination by flies, dust, etc. I think it should be made compulsory to provide a proper meat container as a safeguard.

## FOOD PREMISES

One ice-cream shop registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

Retail butchers' vans were inspected on their round and found fairly satisfactory.

There is only one bakehouse in the division and it was periodically inspected and found satisfactory.

## MILK AND DAIRIES

Supervision of the production and handling of milk at the farm was by the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949, transferred from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and so from the staff of the Health Department to officials of the newly-formed milk and dairies committees. Local Authorities are still responsible for the supervision of all sanitary matters affecting the farmer's residence and it was their duty to see that the farmer and his family had a satisfactory water supply, but they were no longer concerned with the condition of the shippens or the purity of the water used in the dairy. In the past sanitary inspectors had succeeded in many areas of raising considerably the standard of cleanliness of milk supplies by visiting farms and give advice on the spot. Now they were debarred from this service and no one else appeared to be doing it. Milk was a most important



article of diet, especially for the young, and of all food stuffs was probably the most subject to contamination by pathogenic bacteria. The Food and Drugs Act, 1938, gave wide powers to the Public Health staff to supervise the preparation of storage of all food for sale. It is strange then that milk has been singled out by the new regulations as the one article to be removed from the supervision just at the very point in the course of its handling where contamination is likely to occur. The register of all wholesale traders and retail purveyors of milk in the district were transferred to the Ministry when the Act came into force.

Control of milk distributors is still retained by the Councils and also the issue of dealers' licences in designated milk. No distributors were registered and no dealers' licences were issued during the year.

#### INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Very few notifications were received during the year. When received investigations were made to ascertain the source and steps to thoroughly disinfect the rooms, clothing, bedding, etc., of the patients.

#### FOODS

A variety of canned foods were surrendered by traders and condemned as unfit for human consumption. Some fresh meat and bacon were also condemned as unfit due to decomposition.

#### NUISANCES

Twenty-four complaints were received and investigated and measures were taken to abate them by the service of notices.

#### REFUSE COLLECTION

The collection of refuse from the village of Llanfarian was commenced during the year, and the collection at Llanilar and Pentrellyn continued. Disposal is by means of controlled tipping and burning, and the tip periodically treated for rodent and vermin destruction.

#### CAMPING GROUNDS

There are no licensed camping grounds in the district.

#### CIVIL BUILDING CONTROL

The task of issuing building licences devolves upon the Sanitary Inspector on behalf of the Minister of Works.

Licences to the value of £9,822 for repair and improvement of houses. Licences were issued for the erection of nine new houses by private enterprise.

The above figures include the licences issued in the Northern Division.

#### FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS

There are 20. Factories with power, 11 ; Factories without power, 9. All were periodically visited and found satisfactory.

I am, Your obedient Servant,  
J. ARTHUR REES.





